



Speakers and Moderators May 17-19, 2022



Alroy Billiman is a US army veteran who was wounded during combat in Iraq. In 2007, he was awarded the Purple Heart. He is the first Native American graduate of the Horses for Heroes – NM Inc. Cowboy Up! Program, and he serves as the Native American Peer Mentor Support Specialist. When not helping at Horses for Heroes, Mr. Billiman keeps busy managing his family ranch on the Navajo Reservation. He is currently spearheading a Horses for Heroes – NM collaborative water restoration project for his ranch on the Navajo Reservation with Villanova University's Humanitarian Engineering program.



Tracy Agiovlasis, LPN, CPM, ADAC, has been a rehabilitation nurse in a wide variety of arenas from acute care to home care. She received her nursing license in 1983 and an Associates of Arts in 1984. She is both a Certified Public Manager through New Mexico State University Extension and a Certified ADA Coordinator through University of Missouri since 2019. Tracy has been the program manager for the Governor's Commission on Disability NM Technology Assistance Program since 2014 and has been a New Mexico AgrAbility Program partner since 2018. She was the executive director of a non-profit, Friends in Time, for many years, bringing experience in program management deeply rooted in direct care and case-management of individuals with disabilities and aging challenges.



Kevin and Bobbie Branum started their lives together in 2016. They have three wonderful children. They are youth teachers at Grace Baptist Church. They have lived in New Mexico their whole lives and have always been involved in agriculture. After partnering with the Sanchez family when the COVID pandemic made it hard to purchase meat, they opened the 1912 Market. This went perfect with the fact they also bought their own farm around that same time. By working with many other New Mexico-producing families, they spend their time helping to ensure New Mexicans have fresh quality food products.



Don Bustos is a family farmer from Northern New Mexico, farming land that has been in his family since the Spanish Land Grant of 1598. He was one of the first farmers in New Mexico to receive organic certification and has been certified for over 20 years. Don served as co-director of the American Friends Service Committee's New Mexico Program from 2008-2016, where he focused on training beginning farmers and developing farmer networks throughout the state. Don served on the USDA's Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) board and was chair of the Western SARE board from 2011-2013. He also serves on the board of the New Mexico Acequia Association and is a former board member of the Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture. He has received numerous awards, including the New Mexico Farmer of the Year in 2006, the New

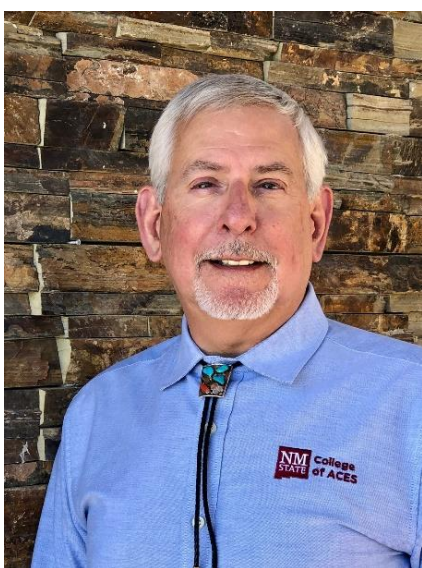
Mexico Organic Farmer of the Year in 2012, and the New Mexico State University's Leyendecker Agriculturalist of Distinction. Don played a lead role in developing the vision and raising the funds for one of the top farmers' markets in the country, Santa Fe Market Complex.



Cristy J. Carbón-Gaul grew up primarily in Omaha, Nebraska, but considers herself a New Mexican, living in Albuquerque most of her adult life. Her and her husband, Daniel Gaul, moved to New Mexico in 1997. They have two children, two dogs, three cats, and 23 chickens. She is a lawyer licensed by the New Mexico State Bar since 1997, earning her law degree from Creighton University School of Law, graduating cum laude. Her undergraduate degree, a B.S. in Business Administration with a concentration in accounting, is from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. Cristy J. Carbón-Gaul has practiced estate planning, guardianship and conservatorship and probate law in New Mexico for over 20 years. She is also the Probate Judge for Bernalillo County.



Matt Cogorno is currently serving as Not Forgotten Outreach's Interim Executive Director. He has worked with Not Forgotten Outreach since 2019 and has dedicated himself to improving the health and wellbeing of Taos County's Veterans and Military Family community. Not Forgotten Outreach's flagship program, VetCorps, teaches Veterans and Military Families in farming, while teaching them skills to transfer in civilian life. Prior to working for Not Forgotten Outreach, Matt served in AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) and received an environmental studies degree from UC Berkeley, with classes focused on agriculture systems.



Dr. Donald E. Conner is a native of Virginia and presently New Mexico State University College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences Associate Dean and Director of Academic Programs. He joined the College in May 2019. Conner received his B.S. degree in environmental health science from the University of Georgia. He holds M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in food science from UGA, as well. Prior to joining NMSU, Conner served Auburn University for 30 years, most recently as Head of the Poultry Science Department. Conner completed ESCOP/ACOP leadership training in 1998, and is a 2016 fellow of the Food Systems Leadership Institute. In his present position, Conner provides leadership for numerous academic programs in College of ACES, including student recruitment, student success, career placement, and teaching excellence. Dr. Conner and his wife, Kim make their home in Las Cruces. They have two grown daughters; Callie who resides in Charleston, South Carolina, and Chasitie who resides in Atlanta, Georgia.



Caren Cowan is the publisher of the New Mexico Stockman Magazine and the Livestock Market Digest, which she purchased in 2009. Cowan's work for New Mexico's livestock industry over the past 30 years has included representation at the New Mexico Legislature and on Capitol Hill on issues ranging from federal land use to animal health and trade. Additionally, she has work directly with state and federal regulatory agencies addressing the needs of agriculture and the livestock industry. She has also managed litigation on behalf of ranchers and their families. Cowan was reared on a commercial beef ranch in Cochise County, Arizona, some of which she and her sister still own. She is a graduate of the University of Arizona with a B.S. in agricultural communications. She currently serves as the treasurer of the Cattlegrowers Foundation Inc. and offices in Albuquerque.



Kelly Egolf is the manager and CEO of New Mexico Fresh Foods, LLC, the first high-pressure processing tolling facility in the Southwest. She is also the founder of Verde Juice, a line of cold-pressed juices, which she created in 2014, after jaw surgery left her seeking an all-natural liquid food source. Verde Juice is now manufactured by New Mexico Fresh Foods in Albuquerque, as are other beverage brands for food service and retail distribution, including Los Poblanos Botanical Lemonades and Keva Cold-Pressed Juices. New Mexico Fresh Foods is a social enterprise committed to local and organic farming. In 2021, the beverage manufacturer juiced over 50,000 pounds of locally grown apples for hard cider manufacturers and redirected nearly 100,000 pounds of compostable food waste to support a worm farmer in Northern New Mexico. Prior to starting Verde, Kelly spent nearly 20 years working with non-profit organizations in organizational development and strategic planning. Her passion for nutrition came 13 years ago, when she first learned of her daughters' life-threatening allergies. She dedicated that decade to learning how to create delicious foods from scratch and from whole-food ingredients, eschewing preservatives and additives.



Helga Garza is the Executive Director of Agri-Cultura Network, a farmer-owned cooperative in the South Valley of Albuquerque. The network is inclusive of 40 allied farms from urban and rural Rio Grande communities committed to sustainable and regenerative growing methods. Helga is inspired by justice, guided by her ancestral ceremonial agricultural calendar, engaging the community through a holistic intergenerational approach in developing a sustainable food system and environmental economy for New Mexico. Helga is leading efforts that have increased equitable access to healthy local food by removing structural barriers, such as procurement policy, price, availability, and increasing nutritional knowledge through curriculum development of a holistic family-based wellness program that is bilingual, culturally relevant, and community-based. Through these efforts, she is building the capacity of New Mexico's urban and rural small farmers' ability to keep production local through an effective farm-to-market system. Helga is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Leader (2018-2021), Castanea Fellow (2020-2022), Governing Board of the New Mexico Food and Agricultural Policy Council Chair and South Valley Main Street President.



Chance Honey is Farm Credit of New Mexico's Senior Relationship Officer. He has worked at Farm Credit of New Mexico's Roswell branch for over six years. Chance is originally from Southeastern Colorado, where he grew up in agriculture. His family has operated a livestock auction in La Junta, Colorado for over 60 years. Chance enjoys continuing his involvement in agriculture by helping farmers and ranchers finance their operations. Outside of work, he enjoys hunting, rodeo and restoring old trucks.



Rick Iannucci is the founder and executive director of Horses for Heroes – NM Inc. He is a retired U.S. Marshal and former Green Beret. He combines his lifetime of horsemanship training with his military and police special operations training to lead this one of a kind program. His experiences include leading a Special Missions Unit in Colombia, serving as an instructor at the US Military Academy at West Point, and serving as a member of the elite US Marshals Special Operations Group. Some of Mr. Iannucci's accolades include the Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award, the US Marshals Service Directors Award and the National Tactical Officers Association Award of Merit for his work in Colombia. He currently serves as the Chaplain for the New Mexico State Senate and is the Chaplaincy Section Chair for the National Tactical Officers Association.



Ryan Jenkins, CSP, is an internationally-recognized keynote speaker, virtual trainer, and three-time published author. His latest book is *Connectable: How Leaders Can Move Teams From Isolated to All In*. For a decade, he has helped organizations optimize generational dynamics, lessen worker loneliness, and prepare for the future of work. Ryan's top-ranked insights have been featured in Forbes, Fast Company, and The Wall Street Journal. He is also co-founder of LessLonely.com, the world's first resource fully dedicated to reducing worker isolation and strengthening team connections. Ryan lives in Atlanta, Georgia with his wife, three children and yellow Labrador.



A New Mexico State University Professor, **Sonja Koukel**, PhD, is the Cooperative Extension Health Specialist. In the Extension system, she has state-wide responsibilities providing health-related evidence- and research-based information and programs to county Extension agents, private and public institutions and community stakeholders. Along with her statewide Extension responsibilities, Sonja serves as the New Mexico AgrAbility Project Director (NMAP, 2018–2022).



Dr. Jay Lillywhite joined the New Mexico State University Department of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business faculty in 2002. He currently serves as the head of the department and as a co-director for NMSU's Center of Excellence in Sustainable Food and Agricultural Systems. He has taught various courses related to agricultural economics and business, including courses related to marketing, finance and business management. His research interests include consumer behavior and preferences, economic impact analysis, agribusiness management and business feasibility.



Jennifer Luitjens Bahr is the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Director of Education and has been recently named the RMFU Foundation Director. In her roles, she oversees all youth and adult education programs, the RMFU Cooperative Development Center and special projects. She has worked in education and membership/organizational development since starting with RMFU in 2006, and prior to that she was employed by National Farmers Union in both the Education and Membership Departments for more than 10 years. Rocky Mountain Farmers Union is a 115-year-old grassroots membership organization with members throughout New Mexico, Colorado and Wyoming.



Katie Mechenbier is a soil and water conservation specialist at the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, where she's been a member of the team for about 10 years. Many Soil and Water Conservation District board supervisors are producers, and she enjoys working with agricultural producers across the state. She not only gets to work with and meet amazing people throughout the state, but she also gets to see and hear firsthand the many different ag practices that take place in New Mexico. Katie was raised on the family farm in the Middle Rio Grande Valley. The third of four girls, her parents instilled in each of them a strong work ethic and a determination for success. Her parents started their family-owned and operated business, 4 Daughters Land & Cattle Co., when she was young and have grown it into a thriving and diverse operation. The company encompasses several farms throughout the Rio Grande Valley, producing alfalfa, corn, oats and pecans. 4 Daughters also has a cow/calf operation on their ranches west of Belen. The ranch operation feeds into their feedlot operation located in Los Lunas. They contract most of their fat cattle sales through Cargill and Caviness Beef Packers. Katie is pictured with her father, Mike Mechenbier.



Eduardo (Lalo) Medina is a program coordinator with the New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business. He holds a Masters of Agriculture in Agriculture Business degree. He is responsible for building relationships with farmers and ranchers as part of the NMSU Cooperative Extension Research and Outreach Assistance Network Team. He identifies and facilitates the linking of resources within the NMSU system, USDA and with other outside organizations related to supporting and educating of SMFR agriculture and local food systems. He also develops bilingual outreach materials in order to communicate information about small farms and urban agriculture. He plays a leadership role in the bi-national Extension initiative REINU (Red de Extención e Innovación Nacional Universitaria). Additional responsibilities for Medina include the USDA Agricultural Mediation Program.

As the designated USDA Agricultural Mediation Officer for New Mexico and part of the Arizona Forest Service, he mediates agricultural disputes between farmers/ranchers and USDA throughout the State of New Mexico. The program is administered by the NMSU Cooperative Extension Service and has been certified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He provides a voluntary alternative to litigation, arbitration or formal appeals through the use of impartial third party mediation.



Wes Medlock is the project manager for the Harvest Food Hub & Kitchen at San Juan College in Farmington, New Mexico. Wes currently lives just over the state border in Durango, Colorado but has been a champion for the local food system in San Juan County, New Mexico. Before his current position with the Harvest Food Hub & Kitchen, Wes worked for the NMSU Extension office in San Juan County, managing a land-linking program for farmers and landowners called the New Farmer Network. Wes has also had the opportunity to start the New Farmer Incubator program, where he is currently training several new farmers go from seed to market. The Incubator program is located at the Growing Forward Farm, a new 12-acre, hands-on educational farm in Aztec, New Mexico. Wes

has poured thousands of hours developing the Growing Forward Farm since 2020 and is now connecting this work to the growing Harvest Food Hub & Kitchen at San Juan College.



Susann Mikkelsen has close to 30 years of experience in nonprofit and small business development, including experience working with producers and producer groups on business planning and development, marketing and diversification. She also has tremendous experience in nonprofit management and leadership, fundraising and marketing. She is presently an NMSU Cooperative Extension Service agent and has served as a Cooperative Development Specialist for the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Cooperative Development Center for 16 years, most of which have been spent in New Mexico. Susann is a native of New Mexico, the fifth generation raised on the family's small cattle ranch in Datil, New Mexico. Mikkelsen holds a bachelor's of science in public relations from Northern Arizona University, and a master's of science in public service/leadership and policy, with an emphasis in rural development from DePaul University.



Tim “The Dairy Farmer” Moffett is tractor-driving, calf-pulling, manure-hauling farmer and comedian. Tim is still a real live Florida dairy farmer and has traveled North America entertaining crowds for nearly 20 years at clubs, agriculture events, local and state fairs and one family reunion. Being the youngest of six kids, Tim talks about farm life, family life and everything in between. You don’t have to live on a farm to understand Tim’s laugh-per-minute style of comedy. Tim’s newest album “Farm Raised” was produced by Larry the Cable Guy’s own GIT-R-DONE RECORDS and can be heard regularly on Sirius XM.



Jason New is the New Mexico Department of Agriculture Marketing and Development Division Director. He earned a bachelor’s degree in agricultural business and agricultural economics and a master’s in agricultural extension and education from New Mexico State University. He is an alumnus of the New Mexico Agricultural Leadership Program. New’s professional career started at New Mexico Farm Bureau in 1998, and he moved to NMDA in 2011, serving brief roles in the director’s office and in the Standards and Consumer Services Division before accepting an Agricultural Marketing Specialist-International position in 2012. In this capacity, he developed global markets for New Mexico food and agriculture products in Europe, China, South Korea, and southeast Asia. In 2019, New accepted the NMDA Marketing and Development Division Director position. The New family maintains a small pecan orchard in Dona Aña County, continuing his family’s three generations in agriculture, while remaining active in 4-H and FFA.



Ben Rasmussen began his agriculture and food system career urban farming in Minneapolis in 2010. Following this passion to remote farms in the Driftless region of Wisconsin and the Gila Wilderness, he landed in Silver City in 2014 and immediately began work with the National Center for Frontier Communities. Following an immersive incubation period that culminated in groundbreaking research, he helped launch the Frontier Food Hub in April 2018. The Frontier Food Hub aims to enhance and connect the food system in southwest New Mexico and beyond.



Chadelle “Chaddy” Robinson is an assistant professor in the New Mexico State University Department of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business. She earned her Ph.D. at New Mexico State University in the College of Business. Her research and Extension efforts aim to improve producers’ incomes by providing a better understanding of consumer behavior, market research and general business research.



Verity Ulibarri is an owner/operator of AVVA Farms, with her husband, Anthony Ulibarri, in Curry County New Mexico. Primary products are grain sorghum, wheat, forages and cattle. She is a fifth-generation farmer and continues to be active in farm management, production and farm-related organizations. Verity has 15 years of agricultural lending experience as a relationship officer and credit officer with Farm Credit of New Mexico. She has served as treasurer and chair of the United Sorghum Checkoff Program and is a current board director for U.S. Grains Council, a farmer envoy for Solutions from the Land, a member of Eastern New Mexico’s Annie’s Project steering committee, and a long term member of National Sorghum Producers.



Jeroen van der Ploeg is an 8th generation dairyman living in Clovis, New Mexico. He and his family immigrated to the U.S. in 2003 from Friesland, a province in The Netherlands. They are currently milking about 2,300 cows and farm 4,000 acres. The van der Ploegs also run a feed yard with about 4,500 head currently. Jeroen produces Freanna cream-top milk and yoghurt made with their fresh milk. In addition, he and his wife Traci also own The Milkshed, a coffee shop created to market their dairy products. Traci and Jeroen were named one of four of the National Outstanding Young Farmers finalists.



Traci van der Ploeg grew up south of Albuquerque and always had a love for agriculture and an interest in dairy marketing. She married her husband, Jeroen, in 2013 and they have three children: Geritt (6), and twins Teis and Andelynn (4). Traci was the coordinator for New Mexico Ag in the Classroom and sold dairy supplies before working for Freanna, Jeroen's family's milk and yoghurt production company. Traci now runs The Milkshed, a coffee shop created to market their dairy products. Traci and Jeroen were named one of four of the National Outstanding Young Farmers finalists.



From 2018 to the present, **Michael Venticinque** has served as the New Mexico Farmers' Marketing Association Value Chain Coordinator. He is a Harmonized Plus GAP auditor for the United States Department of Agriculture and a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points Plan writer for the University of Nebraska. From 2006 to 2018, he was the area manager for grocery retail independent and national chains.



Dr. Marcy Ward became the New Mexico State University Extension Livestock Specialist in June of 2013. Marcy received her bachelor of science degree in Animal Science from Colorado State University in 1991, and her master of science degree from NMSU in Animal Science in 1993. She then went to work for Purina Mills, Inc. as a dairy specialist in Stephenville, Texas. After three years, she was transferred to South Central Kansas, where she worked with all livestock species. She received a Ph.D. in Ruminant Nutrition from North Dakota State University in 2005. Marcy was the Colby Community College Beef Program Director from 2005 to 2013. She then returned to NMSU, where she has been the Cooperative Extension Services Livestock Specialist for the last nine years.



Sarah Wentzel-Fisher is the executive director of the Quivira Coalition based in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She lives at and helps operate Polk's Folly Farm, a direct market, farrow to finish hog farm in San Antonito, New Mexico. She also sits on the boards of the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union and the Southwest Grassfed Livestock Alliance. She enjoys advocating for healthy soils, agricultural workforce and regional market development, as well as the working lands of New Mexico.



Originally from Seattle, **Clinton Wilson** spent most of his career working for social-service non-profits in the Pacific Northwest. In 2017 he and his family relocated to Colorado where he has spent the last four years working with farmers and ranchers as the executive director of Poudre Valley Community Farms: a farmland cooperative, based in Fort Collins. Now the program director for AgWell, his goal is to build a more connected, community-focused, collaborative and robust support system for the agricultural community in the Rocky Mountain Region.